

# RUSSIAN RIVER INTERIM ACTION MANAGEMENT PLAN

## I. INTRODUCTION

An interim action plan is presented to guide the 1979 management of the Kenai National Moose Range's portion of the lower Russian River and its confluence with the Kenai River. The plan shall be an interim management guide to be replaced, hopefully by 1980, with a cooperative management plan with the Chugach National Forest. This plan specifically acknowledges the closely related public use management problems of both Chugach National Forest and Kenai National Moose Range (KNMR).

It is also hoped that the information and results of these interim measures will assist in preserving all future options for development of a permanent strategy for the area. However, a final decision on the area cannot be made until adjudication of the Cook Inlet 14H1 Land Selections is completed.

## II. BACKGROUND

### Historical

The clear waters of the Russian River and the associated lake system have historically attracted sport and subsistence fishing. The Russian River system was known for both natural sockeye salmon runs and excellent rainbow trout populations. Prior to active management by KNMR or the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) private use had been well established. Though trout fishing pressure has been low in recent years, heavy fishing pressure had impacted the "trophy size" rainbow trout fishery before 1940. The present rainbow trout populations within the system appear to be healthy, though management for large rainbow trout has not been practiced since their initial disappearance. Sockeye salmon runs have remained healthy through the years, though fluctuating according to escapement.

Archeological evidence also exists of possible prehistoric as well as historic use of the Russian River-Kenai River system. Evidence of Russian occupation of the Kenai Peninsula may well be present in the immediate Russian River area. An archeological survey of the area is scheduled for this spring to verify and document prehistoric uses.

In the 1930's and early 1940's a guide camp was established on the south bank of the Kenai River. This facility consisted of a cabin structure, tent frames, a horse corral, and other facilities associated with a guide camp. Sometime between formal establishment of the KNMR in 1941 and when the first refuge manager was appointed, the camp and cabin was moved to the north side of the river (present site of Sportsman's Lodge). It is suspected that at this time, or slightly before, the ferry operation was established to transport fishermen to the south side of the river. At that time a narrow dirt road from local communities provided access to the ferry site. Subsequent road constructions in the developing Kenai Peninsula (1946, 1955) provided a significant

increase in access to the area from Alaska's major population centers. What was once a narrow trail from the local dirt road to the ferry evolved into a de-facto campground by the time the first KNMR manager reported for duty. Increasing population and improved access from Anchorage and other growing towns probably accounted for the development of the de-facto campground and parking area.

A special use permit for the Kenai River ferry was issued as early as 1955, though the ferry operated for many years previous with or without a special use permit. The operation of the ferry has been historically conducted by the private lodge on the north side of the river.

Development of the site as an improved campground was accomplished in 1962 under the Accelerated Public Works Program. Original design included campsites, tent sites, tables, and toilets with a planned capacity of 40-50 units.

Public use associated problems, especially litter, were identified at the time the first refuge manager reported in 1948. Litter, as well as human excrement, were particularly noticable during heavy use periods through the 1950's. Certain amounts of crowding during peak salmon runs were identified in the 1950's, and photo documentation shows single day use was very heavy during the early 1960's. During 1965, for example, the 40-50 unit camping area was exceeded by over 90 vehicles with 145 units counted in a single day. In short, heavy use coinciding with the salmon run has been the rule, rather than the exception. Public use of the river system and associated campground has been minimal or non-existent during non-salmon periods or during fishing closures.

Use of the Kenai-Russian River campground was generally difficult to control, and vehicle parking off of the established roadway combined with periodic flooding caused significant soil loss and root exposure. Records also indicate that a large number of the vehicles historically using the area were large camper or motorhome type units. Later redesign of the facility was partially based on the disproportionate use of large camper vehicles.

In 1969 a heavy windstorm preceded by heavy flooding had caused significant damage to many surrounding trees. The combination of natural factors and disturbed surface area, aggravated by previous localized heavy human use, caused many hazardous trees to develop (see pictures).

The present facility was established in 1974 with the following stated objectives:

- (1) Optimize USFWS program benefits (outputs) while minimizing non-programmed public benefits in accord with established PPBE principles.
- (2) Reduce operating costs.
- (3) Provide facilities of sufficient capacity and quality commensurate with Service standards for a fishing site.
- (4) Minimizing unsafe conditions and hazards to the public.

The camping area was then turned into a fisherman access site, thus providing a situation where more members of the public could experience wildlife oriented refuge visits, while doing the least damage to the access area. It was noted that the loop type campground had not been in harmony with the actual nature of the use occurring; (i.e., heavy use by large pickup and motorhome vehicles) thus causing uncontrolled and locally damaging use. The reconstruction of the area was completed and several programs to accompany the new facility were outlined. Many of the new programs such as litter patrols, comprehensive signing, and staffing were never completely implemented.

Fairly good documentation was made on how the new facility would improve the public-use problem on the north side of the river, but little reference was made to the south side of the river. It was noted that heavy use was occurring, but no reference was made to the new facility's impact on total fishermen days, daily crowding, or increased foot wear.

Use of the south side of the river is where the actual fishing activity has historically taken place. Most fishermen gain access by using the Kenai River ferry, though fishing use undoubtedly predates the ferry's operation.

Disturbances to the south bank area seem to have occurred where the ferry docked and apparently some human bones were found in this area. A 1940 photo documentation shows the development of a well worn foot trail along the upper cut bank area. The adjacent meadow also shows use as a horse pasture and corral in the area directly adjacent the present ferry landing.

Litter on the south side of the river was apparently pretty significant during years of use, and early refuge managers report burying excess garbage after clean-ups.

Evidence exists of archeological finds in the area and as previously stated, early residents found some bones along the bank. No human bones have been found for approximately 20 years. Some local residents seem to feel that early Russian residents occupied the area. No specific finds have been identified to refuge personnel, though sites no doubt exist. The area in general was selected as a 14H1 site by Cook Inlet Native Association's part of their ANSCA settlement.

The sport fisheries division of the ADF&G has managed the area rather intensively since 1963. Prior to 1963 very little management was initiated concerning the sockeye salmon run. The ADF&G has established a fly fishing area only in more recent years. The ADF&G operate a fish weir below Lower Russian Lake during the salmon run. They have used many openings and closures to ensure salmon escapements. The size of the salmon runs have increased in recent years do to intensive management and/or environmental factors. According to records kept by the ADF&G total man-days have been directly proportional to the size of the yearly run of fish. The combination of more calendar days open to fishing and better fishing apparently accounts for the increase. It is difficult

to assess the exact impact of general population increases and notoriety of the fishery which have occurred irrespective of fish run size. The general trend, however, seems to be higher annual man-day counts. The ADF&G is now constructing a fishpass around the Russian River falls which should have the general effect of allowing more fish to spawn during high water years. This will contribute to stabilized high fish returns.

There have been two distinct runs of salmon historically. In 1977 and 1978, however, the runs were large and fairly continuous. Historically there have been no fish in the Russian River over the July 4 weekend. Past emergency closures, common during this high use time of the year, may partly account for the very large increases in man-day figures for 1977 and 1978.

Increased use has also occurred in the upriver portions of Russian River. Several trends and non-duplicating factors, such as run size, water conditions, fishing knowledge, fishing success, and crowding at the confluence have caused this to occur.

#### Present Situation

An estimated 69,860 fisherman trips occurred in conjunction with the Kenai-Russian River fishery during 1978 for the highest yearly recorded public use for the area. Previous years' counts for the entire fishery were significantly less than in 1977 and 1978. It is believed that a greater proportion of the entire man-days occurred on KNMR at the Kenai-Russian River confluence during previous years. The up-river areas are now receiving an increasing proportion of the use. This is especially true since the establishment of the USFS campground approximately 1 mile up-river from the mouth.

The USFS campground has been in operation for several years with a self administered fee system. The USFS campground consists of four camping loops and a large day-use parking area. The day parking area has been used as a de-facto overnight area in recent years. The Chugach National Forest, confronted with vehicle congestion, controlled vehicle access during 1977 and 1978 by operating a shuttle service for day users. Proposed programs for 1979 will institute a highly controlled entrance station and a conversion to permitting only overnight campers within the campground. All day-use persons will either walk in or be shuttled from the entrance station into the area. Length of stay will be reduced to three days, and an overnight fee will be collected at the entrance station.

Approximately three miles of the Russian River are open to fly fishing only. In addition approximately one mile of the Kenai River is associated with the Russian River fishery. Several hundred yards of the confluence are normally closed to fishing during the early salmon run.

Littering remains high on all portions of the Kenai and Russian Rivers open to sport fishing. Monofilament line is a particular problem in a high use fishery of this nature. Surface impacts associated with heavy recreational use are significant, especially along a three mile section of a de-facto trail on the Chugach National Forest side of the Russian River. Roots have been exposed, large muddy areas have developed during rainy periods, and vegetation has been trampled. Bank degradation and trail width have increased and soil compaction is widespread. The USFS has made plans to improve the trail and put a hard surface down for the entire length of stream open to salmon fishing. There is no continuous trail on the KNMR side of the Russian River, though several short paths may be forming on certain flat stretches of the river bank. Numerous steep hillsides and cliffs, as well as underbrush, have prevented a continuous up-river trail from developing on KNMR land. Access to favorite spots on the KNMR ususally requires wading if water levels permit. Much of the use is localized to this wading activity and to specific river beaches. Some vegetation trampling and minor compaction appear to be occurring but are restricted to these popular pools. As use has increased at popular "fishing holes" the overflow fishing has occurred on the KNMR side of the river.

Heavy use at the mouth of the Russian River and on the Kenai River, just below the confluence, is primarily on KNMR lands. Participants gain access to this area by walking down-river from the USFS campground, by the Kenai River ferry, and by private boat. The ferry is powered by the rivers current and operated by special use permit. The fee is now \$300.00 per year and has been \$300.00 since 1970. The ferry operator keeps annual records of persons transported by the ferry. They show approximately 20,000 persons rode the ferry during 1978.

Bank disturbance at the confluence of the Russian and Kenai Rivers has definitely occurred over the 35-40 years of recreational use (refer to pictures). Considering the number of persons that have used the area, bank and adjacent meadow degradation would have to be classified as moderate. Periodic flooding of the river has combined with and in many cases overshadowed human foot wear. The Kenai River is subject to cyclic flooding caused by build up of impounded glacial waters within the Snow River system. The flooding usually occurs in late summer or early fall (see photos). It is believed that the immediate landing area and twenty yards either side of the landing has received the most disturbance to the bank. Comparison of 1940 photos with 1969 photos shows some leveling off of the landing area, but little or no movement or visual change is noted from 1969 to present. Certain significant areas of impact seem to have developed in the initial heavy use of the area, but as tough glacial till became exposed subsequent yearly impacts have leveled off.

Soil and grasses at the actual mouth of the Russian River are somewhat compacted and a trail along the top of the bank is well defined. This area does not seem to suffer from the same poor drainage problems as do

certain portions of the USFS's de-facto trail. The condition of the adjacent meadow shows narrow spur trail development, especially enroute to the restrooms, but overall vegetation may be improved from earlier pasture uses.

The zone immediately south of the ferry landing has a grove of spruce trees that were left unburned by the 1969 burn. This area suffers from a lack of understory and some exposed roots, but the trees seem fairly hardy and are standing up well.

The south side of the Kenai River though receiving a considerable amount of foot use does not receive periodic flooding like the northern shoreline. The high and dry nature of the bank has saved top soil from washing away after human foot wear of the vegetative cover.

Aerial photos also show that a small path exists leading down the Kenai River approximately 3/4 mile to a popular fishing spot. Also present is an old road or fire line that was used to contain the Russian River fire of 1969. A portion of this trail may be used to walk downstream on.

Picnic tables, garbage cans, and two pit toilets have been provided and remain at the site. Signs prohibiting overnight camping and open fires are located on the south side of the Kenai River. Violations of these rules occasionally occur but not to a great extent. The restrooms on the south shore of the river are pit toilets and are in poor condition.

The Kenai-Russian River access area previously discussed serves the popular ferry crossing. Capacity of the area has been approximately 190 normal size cars and significantly less motorhomes. Both day and overnight camping have been allowed and length of stay has been seven days. Tent camping activity has been occurring all around the parking area and within the remaining half circle camping loop. Parking bumpers for the area and entrance road have never been installed, though plans had been made to use them. A fee has never been charged for an overnight stay at the Kenai-Russian River access area, even before the character of the area was changed in 1974.

Signing of the area has been reactive rather than planned.

Garbage cans have been used in the past and daily pickups are a significant drain in overall maintenance expenditures.

Two vault-pit toilets are present and are pumped by private contract. One toilet is poorly placed and seldom used. Overall condition of restrooms has been poor, due to high use and minimal maintenance.

Two hand pump wells are presently located within the area and did not meet State drinking requirements during 1978.

Entrance to the area is gained by a narrow gravel road off of the Sterling Highway and by a road coming from adjacent private land (Sportman's Lodge).

In general the entire complex has received a high level of human use and the inability to respond to the associated problems have caused only basic custodial services to be provided. Staffing of this area has been largely confined to wage grade personnel.

In summary it seems apparent that several adverse impacts may be occurring which may be attributed to heavy human use of the area and/or inability of management to deal successfully with large numbers of fishermen. Though certain impacts are occurring to the surface area, due to heavy foot use, the glaring problems are excess litter, sanitation, vehicle parking, lack of visitor orientation, and peak day crowding.

### III. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

#### Kenai-Russian River Access

1. Vehicles driving off hardened surfaces
2. Camping in non-designated areas
3. Expense of garbage can pickup
4. Restrooms poorly maintained
5. Lack of proper orientation for visitors
6. Litter
7. Congested parking
8. Moderate disturbance of river bank and need to maintain buffer along Kenai River
9. Lack of refuge regulation enforcement
10. Irractic signing
11. Fences and visual barrier in need of repair
12. Inefficient use of parking area
13. Protection of remaining trees in area
14. Blockage of general Kenai River access
15. Well water not potable during 1978 season
16. Vehicular use spilling over into other refuge areas
17. Minimal contact with seasonal refuge personnel

#### Southside Russian River-Kenai River Confluence

1. Crowding during peak days
2. Poor restroom condition and human waste

3. Litter
4. Identification of archeological sites
5. Protection of archeological sites once identified
6. Moderate spur trail development in adjacent meadow (note; photos show improvement of vegetative cover in recent years)
7. Minimal contact with seasonal refuge personnel

#### Upriver Corridor (KNMR side)

1. Local vegetation trampling
2. Moderate litter

#### IV. GOAL STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the interim actions for 1979 are to carry out previously planned programs associated with the redesign of the Kenai-Russian River access area; and reduce adverse impacts to visitor experiences, refuge lands, and future management options.

1. To provide for an adequately maintained fishing access site commensurate with USFWS standards; i.e., restrooms, solid waste removal, physical facility.
2. To manage the "Kenai-Russian River Fisherman Access Site" and associated lands as an integral part of a group of recreational facilities and opportunities available on KNMR.
3. To manage the Kenai-Russian River Fisherman Access Area and the lands bordering the Russian River in a cooperative fashion with the USFS, and continue open lines of communications with the ADF&G.
4. To manage and protect the area on the basis of actual and potential impacts to various zones within this high use area (i.e., Russian River corridor above USFS campground, Russian River campground downstream to Kenai River, Kenai River shoreline).
5. To protect cultural resources identified within the Russian River-Kenai River complex.
6. To minimize depreciative behavior, environmental impacts, and seek compliance with refuge standards without undue new entries to the Federal Register.
7. To seek a general stabilization in daily crowding conditions, monitor trends in public use, and examine what is the recreation carrying capacity of the area for one time use.



8. To provide fishermen and boaters with traditional access to the Kenai and Russian Rivers while minimizing environmental impacts of such access and associated activities.

#### V. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Many of the following actions were initiated during the planning and redesigning of the Kenai-Russian River area during 1974. For unknown reasons several of the key actions and programs outlined were never carried through. For the interim management of this area for the 1979 season most of the programs associated with the redesign of the area will be carried out and several other easily reversible programs will be initiated:

##### A. Kenai-Russian River Access Area

1. Overnight parking will be allowed, but length of stay will be reduced to 3 consecutive days. NOTE: Overnight parking for fishermen will confine impacts to an intensively managed facility of the KNMR and eliminate dispersed impacts.
2. The half circle camping spur will be blocked off, eliminating driving off of hard surface and reducing parking spaces.
3. Entrance to the area and parking will be confined to the gravel surface by barrier posts and cement bumpers.
4. Signs will be used to prevent blockages of vehicle flow, refuse pickups, and unloading areas (refer to map).
5. The parking area will be closed by a temporary gate when full.
6. The service road to Sportsman Lodge will be blocked off by a gate.
7. Walk-in tent camping will be allowed in half circle loop area adjacent to parking area, though no open fires will be allowed.
8. The area will be evaluated concerning the feasibility of establishing a fee system for this type of access area for the 1980 summer season.

##### B. Reduction of camping associated activities and impacts

1. No open fires at Kenai-Russian River access site.
2. Hand pump wells will be capped.
3. Picnic tables will be removed.
4. Garbage cans will be removed and refuse disposal centralized.
5. Length of stay reduced.

##### C. Solid waste removal

1. Contract for trash removal.
2. Use centralized dumpster.
3. Dumpster will be borrowed from Borough (two 8 cubic yard dumpsters).
4. Litter patrols will be made daily of the entire area.

D. Increased staffing and personnel visibility

1. One Campground Manager/GS-5, Biological Technician.
2. One or two campground assistants.
3. Youth Conservation Corps projects scheduled in area (weekly).
4. Local housing near eastern boundary.
5. Uniformed personnel will be on duty on weekends and for increased hours during each day.
6. Staff on duty in area will assist in future planning for area (i.e., informal surveys, daily diary).
7. Uniform personnel will patrol up the Russian River daily.
8. Increased law enforcement effort by permanent and seasonal staff.

E. Improved interpretive and information program

1. Large bulletin boards will be erected for posting regulations, general KNMR information, and map of area.
2. Interpretive sign explaining, good fisherman ethics, and the new litter control program for the area. Also possible; salmon life cycle exhibit.
3. Signing will be used to inform visitors of regulations and restrict unauthorized activities (see list).

F. Physical facilities

1. Old restroom from 1962 program will be removed and moved to a more appropriate area (see map).
2. Restrooms will be cleaned twice daily (cleaning equipment will be kept at the site).
3. Restrooms will be pumped on an as needed basis to be determined by campground manager.
4. Visual barrier around ferry house and cable deadman will be replaced with attractive log fence.
5. Log fence will be used along entrance to parking area to further protect the buffer area along the Kenai River (see map).
6. A three sided visual barrier will be constructed at the dumpster location (see map).

G. Ferry operation

1. Hours of operation may be extended during periods of long daylight hours to disperse use.
2. Ferry operators will participate in voluntary litter control program (i.e., no disposable containers may be transported across on the Kenai River Ferry).
3. Negotiations to put the ferry operation under a concession contract are underway. Operation will essentially be the same, though the fee should be increased to about \$500.00 for the 1979 season.
4. The concession fee should be re-evaluated each year.

H. South side of Kenai River

1. Pit toilets in poor condition will be replaced and relocated.
2. Picnic tables will be removed.
3. Continued designation as day-use area only (i.e., no camping, no open fires).
4. Designation and signing as litter control area and "pack it out" area.
5. Remove garbage cans from area.
6. Daily litter pickup.
7. Increased visibility of uniformed personnel.
8. An attempt to protect archeological sites will be made if specifically identified.
9. Archeological areas in general will not be signed per se to avoid pilfering.

I. Upriver area

1. Patrols will be made daily.
2. Signing will be kept low key, unless problem areas develop.
3. Day use only (i.e., no camping, no open fires).
4. An inventory of specific spur trail development and any critical area will be made and findings will be recorded.

J. Cooperation between agencies

1. State Troopers will be asked to become involved in daily visits to the Kenai-Russian River access area.
2. Communication between Chugach National Forest and KNMR seasonal employees will be encouraged.
3. The possibility of getting on common radio frequencies may be examined for seasonal employees.
4. Cooperative housing, garbage pickup, and restroom maintenance will be used if beneficial to program.
5. The ADF&G Russian River Project Leader will be asked to inform KNMR staff concerning opening and closure of the Russian River fishery in advance.

K. Federal Register designation

No new regulations are specifically recommended for this area for the 1979 season because of the interim nature of this plan. The only departure from past rules will be the reduction in length of stay. We hope this can be accomplished without going to the Federal Register for 1979.

VI. ESTIMATED 1979 COSTS

	Man-days	Costs presently provided for in AWP	Additional funding needs to implement
Salaries			
Administrative	50	6,400	
Pre-season maintenance	25	3,200	
Summer aids	150		7,200
Equipment/Supplies			
Heavy equipment operation			500
Vehicle (8,000 mi. @ 15¢/mi.)		600	600
Radio			1,000
Housing			1,000
Uniforms			150
Misc. Supplies		500	
Contract Trash			5,600
Pumping of Vaults		500	
Supplies for landscaping, signs and interpretive media			1,500
Travel to Anchorage-airfare & taxies (salaries not included)			
To-date (9 trips)			450
Additional projections			200
Total O & M	225	11,200	18,200

## ADDENDUM: RUSSIAN RIVER INTERIM MANAGEMENT PLAN

The management of the Kenai-Russian River access area will continue under interim framework for 1980. For the most part, the cooperative management, sought between the Kenai National Moose Range and Chugach National Forest, will continue on a positive, but informal, basis. Kenai National Moose Range staff have had an opportunity for input to the draft Forest Service Russian River development and operational plan. In most cases, satisfactory results have occurred. A formalized cooperative plan will again be delayed and may be formalized by 1981. In the mean time and during the 1980 season, proposed Chugach National Forest and Kenai National Moose Range operations will be complimentary and closely coordinated.

Operations for the 1980 summer season will remain essentially the same as described in the 1979 Interim Management Plan. As referred to in the Russian River Analysis for 1979, several positive features were achieved during 1979. Several of these, such as signing, design, and placement of parking bumpers, will remain during 1980. In some cases, minor improvements will be made, based on observations from individual staff members.

The interim nature of this plan requires that we preserve as many management options as possible, stabilize problems in the area, complete further study of the area, and explore a cooperative venture with the Forest Service which will improve operational management.

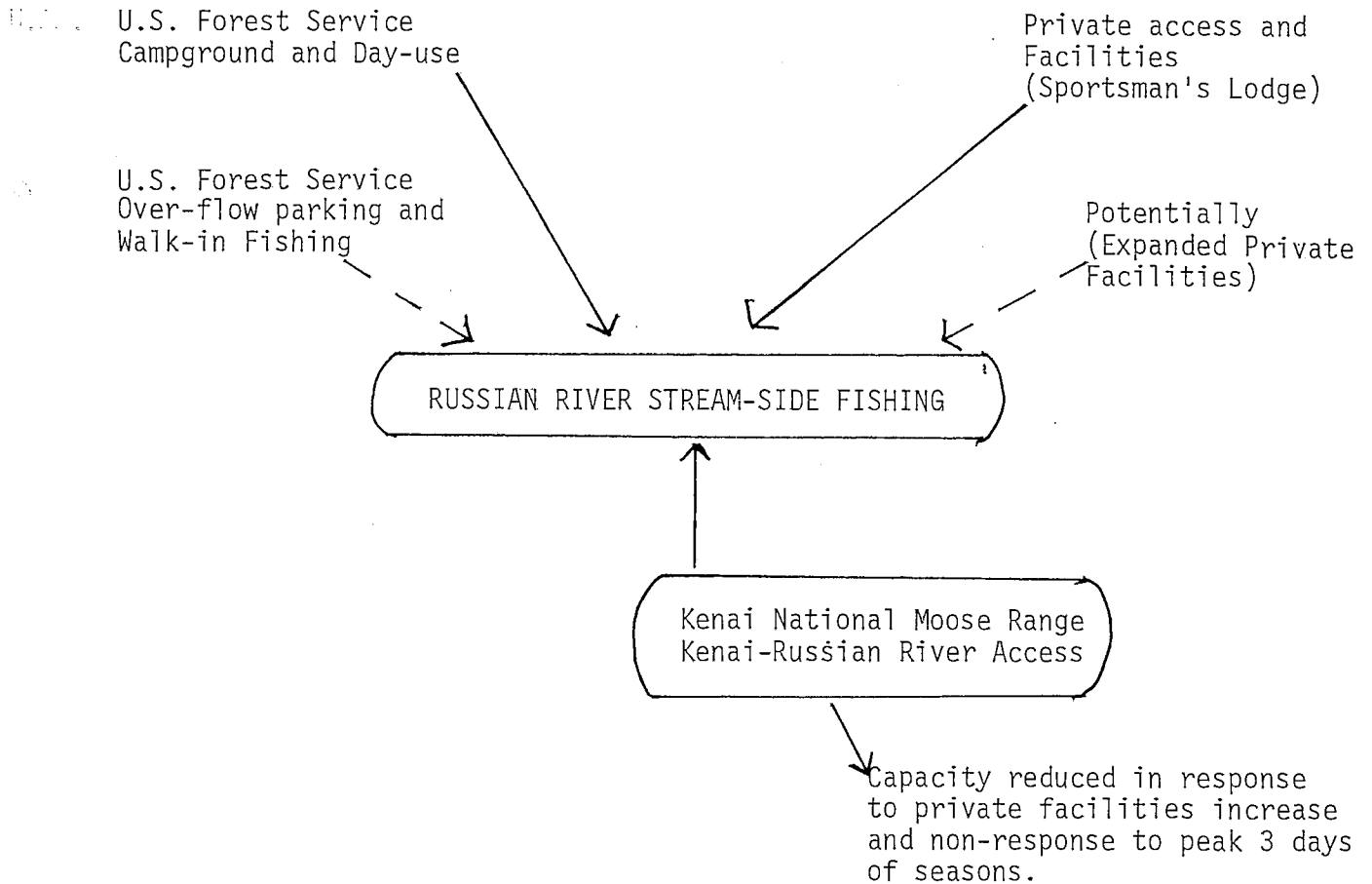
The status of the area makes finalization of a plan very difficult. Many key variables are unknown and may change. Our management role at this stage is to address problems and variables that are known and not likely to change. The objectives for 1979 were based on this concept and we will adapt those interim objectives for 1980 (See Appendix B, Russian River Analysis - 1979).

The following are specific operations, management programs, and techniques that will be changed from 1979. Many of the following programs are the logical sequence of programs initiated during 1979 and others are needed changes:

1. Recreational Use Fee - Although rejected in the 1979 Interim Plan, a fee system was initiated last season. The fee collection will continue; however, reduced staffing will require more utilization of the self-service station.

Length of stay will remain at three days and the fee at \$2.00 for 0-24 hours. The method of collecting fees will remain relatively unchanged with personal collection and self-service both being utilized. During non-peak times, late evenings, and during the weekdays, the entrance station may not be manned and will be self-service. During these times, self-service brochures and general information will remain available and compliance checked at least once a day by a roving patrolman. In most cases, when the entrance station is not attended, personnel will still be available within the area in a public contact role.

## FACTORS INFLUENCING RUSSIAN RIVER FISHERY



2. Personnel - Due to budget constraints, only two seasonal personnel will permanently be stationed near Russian River and working at the site. Scheduling, however, will be based on the assumption that three persons are available. Permanent staff will be utilized in order to make this possible. Both seasonal positions are GS-5, Park Technicians, and are selected for public contact skills. Permanent staff will be encouraged to take an active role when available.

3. Training - In addition to refuge training, Russian River personnel will participate in one day of training with Chugach National Forest summer staff. Personnel will also participate in an orientation with Alaska State Fish and Game Protection Officers, scheduled for May 9.

4. Maintenance and Construction - Kenai River Ferry permittee will replace the small storage facility with an attractive building in order to receive a permit for 1980.

Efforts will be made to make one well potable at Russian River before June 15.

A small fire circle may be established at a yet to be determined location.

Maintenance will remain at a custodial level during 1980. Restrooms will be cleaned on a daily basis and cleaning supplies will be available on site. Restroom pumping will be contracted.

5. Russian River Ferry - The ferry operation will be renewed by a one year Special Use Permit if the operator meets all refuge stipulations. With the exception of rebuilding or refurbishing the storage building, located at the ferry landing, all stipulations will remain the same as 1979. Coast Guard inspection, liability insurance, and refuge inspection of the entire operation will be completed before the permit is issued.

6. Information and Interpretation - The Kenai-Russian River access area is considered to be a key contact point and a variety of information will be available.

Self Attended interpretive signing will be installed when the facility is opened in late May and taken down in late August. Information and regulations for Russian River and refuge-wide programs will be available. A self-service leaflet dispenser will be attached to the contact station when not attended. Employees will have available the ADF&G booklet, "The Russian River Salmon Story."

Volunteers, Mr. and Mrs. Al York, will be utilized on weekends during the salmon run, to give a variety of personal contact programs. Their location will be near the aforementioned fire circle.

7. Safety - In cooperation with ADF&G and Dept of Public Safety, a section of streamside area will be closed to fishing from the bank. This area is directly adjacent the ferry dock on the south side of the Kenai River. Approx. 25 feet will be closed by the refuge manager during the first salmon run and 50 feet during the second run. This closure does not conflict with ADF&G areas and only closed streamside standing.

8. Law Enforcement - Law enforcement, except as performed by the Law Enforcement Assistant Refuge Manager, will remain low key and at an advisory capacity. The presence of personnel in uniform is a minimal preventative law enforcement tool and compliance with refuge regulations will be attempted when possible. Note: In the 1979 Analysis, it was stated that seasonal staff need certain law enforcement capabilities. Since this capability is not available, law enforcement will remain at an inadequate level, using only "pink slips" to record violations.

9. Litter Control and Solid Waste - The litter incentive program, initiated during 1979, will be utilized during the 1980 season, and if time allows, will be expanded. An incentive package will be developed by refuge staff for distribution to youngsters participating in the program.

Two five-cubic-yard dumpsters will be available in the parking lot and two garbage cans located at each restroom. Garbage pickup will be contracted and will begin in June.

10. Public Use Monitoring - A magnetic loop traffic counter will be installed at the entrance station and hooked up to a traffic counter that records time of entry. The Kenai-Russian River parking area will again be closed when full on peak days, and/or when parking becomes congested.

The Forest Service draft plan discusses PAOT (persons at one time) that is allowable. Basically, the thought is to cut off PAOT somewhat below the peak three days during the salmon run. Historically, a few peak days have been significantly higher than the average seasonal ten day peak. We concur with the Forest Service in not responding to "peak" days and our interim management and further monitoring of the area will reflect this. Based on 1979's observations, the present hardened access area can reasonably support average ten-day peak use, but the top three days' use may slightly exceed our ability to accommodate visitors. As mentioned earlier, the facility will be closed when full, or at 140 vehicles. This number is somewhat reduced from the previous designated capacities of 240, and 190 vehicles. Parking capacity is based on the various sizes of vehicles and the need for reduction in congestion.

It is also necessary to state that streamside crowding is, of course, the major problem; and monitoring and controlling access seems to be one of our most workable management tools. Sportsman's Lodge, on adjacent private land, has contributed significantly in the past to parking capacity and access via the Russian River Ferry. During the winter of 1979-80, Sportsman's Lodge did a significant amount of clearing on their property, presumably to clear dead-falls. We are determined that this expansion of parking space for recreational vehicles should not contribute to overall expanded capacity of the general area. In response to the private expansion, we have reduced the number of vehicles that constitute a full facility within our area. In most cases, the facility could park 160-180 vehicles, depending on their size. We have reduced capacity to only 140 vehicles before it is considered closed.